

RURAL DISTRICT
OF
SOUTH WESTMORLAND.

HEALTH COMMITTEE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
Medical Officer of Health

FOR
1920.

KENDAL :
PRINTED BY ATKINSON & POLLITT, STRICKLANDGATE,
1921.

RURAL DISTRICT OF SOUTH WESTMORLAND.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Rural District Council of South Westmorland,

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report for the year 1920, compiled in accordance with your instructions and those of the Ministry of Health.

The advent of a new Census to be taken this year will greatly facilitate the correct compilation of Statistics and Ratios.

My thanks are extended to your Officials, who have rendered me excellent assistance on all occasions, as also to the members of the Medical Profession, whose willing co-operation has been a most valuable asset towards a constructive policy of preventive medicine.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. BARON COCKILL,

Medical Officer of Health,

March 21st, 1921,

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year ended December, 1920.

On November 10th, 1919, a portion of the Parish of Scal-
thwaiterigg, was transferred from South Westmorland to the
Borough of Kendal; the Statistics have been based on the exclusion
of this area from South Westmorland.

Area (land and inland water)	...	...	170,732
Population (Census, 1911)	...	...	19,116
Population (Registrar-General's estimate)	...	...	16,740
Population (local estimate)	...	...	17,740
Inhabited Houses	...	...	4,260
Average Population per house	...	...	4.16

The District rises from the sea-level in the South to heights
of 950 feet in the North. About one-tenth is limestone with a sub-
soil of samel, with soil sufficient to grow pasturage for grazing.
One-tenth is peaty soil suitable for root or grain crops. Two-fifths
is blue rock with coverings similar to that of the limestone area.
The remainder is half hard land with a moderate depth of soil and
sub-soil, and a mixture of rock and glacier boulders.

The District is for the most part agricultural, but there are also
a number of industries, such as :—

- Paper Making.
- Mat Making.
- Comb Making.
- Gunpowder Works.
- Wood Turning.
- Stone and Slate Quarries.
- Woollens.
- Postcard and Photo Printing.

None of these have any particular influence on Public Health.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.							Deaths.			Infant Deaths.					
Crude.	Corrected.	Legitimate.		Illegitimate.		Rate per 1,000 Population.	Crude.	Corrected.	Rate per 1,000 Population.	Legitimate.		Illegitimate.		Total.	
		Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.					Number.	Rate per 1,000 births.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 births.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 births.
352	306	175	165	15	11	21.8	226	245	14.6	19	56	4	154	23	63

COMPARATIVE RATES.

District.		Births.	Deaths.	Infant Deaths.
South Westmorland	...	21.8	14.6	63
Westmorland	...	21.6	13.9	66
England and Wales	...	25.4	12.4	80

CAUSES OF DEATH.

Enteric Fever.	1
Scarlet Fever.	5
Diphtheria.	3
Influenza.	6
Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	12
Tuberculous Meningitis.	3
Other Tuberculous Diseases.	4
Cancer.	33
Rheumatic Fever.	1
Meningitis.	1
Organic Heart Disease.	24
Bronchitis.	16
Pneumonia.	3
Other Respiratory Diseases.	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years).	1
Appendicitis.	1
Cirrhosis of Liver.	4
Nephritis.	6
Puerperal Fever.	2
Parturition.	1
Congenital Debility.	12
Violence.	4
Suicide.	1
Other Defined Diseases.	98
Ill Defined Diseases.	1
Encephalitis Lethargica.	1
TOTAL.	245

SPECIAL DEATH RATES
per 1,000 Population.

Enteric Fever.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	Tuberculous Meningitis.	Other Tuberculous Diseases.	Cancer.	Pneumonia.	Encephalitis Lethargica.
0.05	0.29	0.17	0.35	0.71	0.17	0.23	1.97	0.17	0.05

ANALYSIS OF INFANT DEATHS.

Causes.	1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	under 1 month.	1-3 months.	3-6 months.	6-9 months.	9-12 months.	Under 1 year.
Abdominal Tuberculosis ...						1				1
Convulsions ...	1				1	2				3
Bronchitis ...							2	1		3
Pneumonia ...		1			1					1
Diarrhoea ...			1		1					1
Injury at Birth ...	1				1					1
Congenital Malformation ...	1				1	1				2
Premature Birth ...	4	2	1		7					7
Atrophy, etc. ...	2		2		4					4
	9	3	4		16	4	2	1		23

Still births notified ... 8.

Notification of Births is improving, but 17 were un-notified.

The amount of Poor Law Relief is indicated by the following facts :—

Average daily population in Institutions (Kendal Union) about	...	...	...	160
Annual population receiving Outdoor Relief in South Westmorland Rural District	...	...	...	57

The Westmorland County Hospital, which contains 50 beds, supplies the needs of all South Westmorland, and is usually full.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.

There are storage reservoirs at the following places :—

Lupton, supplying water to the Arnside, Milnthorpe and Hincaster Area.

Levens, supplying water to the Levens Area.

Langdales, supplying water to the Langdale Area.

Potter Fell and Garnett House, supplying water to Burneside Area.

Ghyll Head, supplying water to Undermillbeck Area.

Casterton, Barbon and Natland, supply their own respective villages.

Burton is supplied direct from the Manchester Corporation supply from Thirlmere.

These supplies are usually sufficient except in very dry seasons, and are constant.

Additional reservoir storage has recently been made in connection with Lupton supply, which will probably do away with the necessity of obtaining water by meter from the Manchester Corporation Works, in the case of a prolonged drought. The quality of the water is good; there is no plumbo-solvent action. The Levens supply is hard.

Two public enquiries have been held by the Ministry of Health into schemes for the supply of Hincaster, and Natland; these were sanctioned: the former has been completed, and the latter is in abeyance for the present. The remainder of the District is dependent upon streams and shallow wells, the quality of which is moderate and the quantity not nearly sufficient, under ordinary circumstances, but owing to the prevalence of wet weather this year there has been no shortage.

Rivers and Streams.

There has been some pollution of the River Bela from the Paper Mills at Beetham. This is in process of being remedied.

The Woollen Mills at Mealbank cause much pollution to the River Mint; here, too, some remedy is being undertaken, but as yet is not too satisfactory.

Complaints were received as to the effluent from the sewage works at Casterton; this has now been remedied.

Drainage and Sewerage.

This is effected generally by cesspools or by land irrigation, except in a few instances where villages are sewered; sewage disposal works exist at Milnthorpe, Burton, Casterton, Langdale, Staveley, and Holme, and consist of septic tanks and depositing tanks, with downward filtration. At Burton there are aerobic filters. A portion of Arnside sewage is discharged directly into the sea at a distance below the village. A new sewage system has been arranged for part of Holme, and a scheme for the remainder is now before the Ministry of Health. The Milnthorpe sewage disposal has been much improved by the cutting out of the fresh water that entered the system.

Closet Accommodation.

There are 623 water closets and 3,570 privies. Twenty-three privies were converted into water closets during the year.

Scavenging.

This is undertaken by the Authority at Arnside, Milnthorpe, Burton, Holme, Hugill, Staveley, Scalthwaiterigg, and Dillicar. The efficiency is moderate to good. At other places it is done by owners and occupiers.

House refuse is also removed by the Authority at Barbon, Langdale, Levens, Kentrigg, Strickland Ketel, and Storth.

There has been some difficulty in getting this work done owing to the shortage of manual labour. The material is disposed of by placing it on the land or on tips.

Any receptacles emptied are disinfected with disinfecting powder.

There are 85 ashbins in the District, and 25 conversions have been made from ashpits to ashbins.

Sanitary Inspection of District.

There have been 531 inspections carried out and the defects and nuisances found were as follows:—

Water Supplies not satisfactory	...	...	36
Closet Accommodation	...	...	56
Yards Defective	...	...	4
Drainage Defective	...	...	135
No. of rooms deficient in light	...	...	28
No. of rooms deficient in ventilation	...	...	270
Houses where rooms were damp	...	...	150
Houses with defective floors	...	...	20
Houses with other defects	...	...	109
Total			808

There were 25 Statutory Notices served and 320 Informal ones. Many of these referred to work which should have been done prior to the War. Many difficulties have to be faced in remedying defects owing to the high price of labour and materials and the shortage of available labour, so that little has been accomplished beyond minor improvements.

PREMISES AND OCCUPATION CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND
REGULATIONS.

Slaughter-houses	...	...	10
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	1
Cowsheds and Dairies	...	...	144
Total			155

An accumulation of offal was found at one Slaughter House and was remedied.

There are no underground sleeping rooms.

Schools.

The sanitary conditions and water supplies of the elementary schools are, on the whole, satisfactory: there is a shortage of water in some places when an abnormally dry season occurs.

There were 12 school closures on account of Influenza, Measles, Mumps, Scarlet Fever, and Diphtheria. Whenever a serious epidemic occurs, a general inspection of all school children is made.

FOOD.

(a) Milk Supply.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops have been inspected from time to time and a notice was sent to all occupiers as to the necessity of strict cleanliness with regard to milk vessels, the hands of workers, and the udders of cows.

There are 144 Milk Sellers on the Register. The supply is fairly good and the arrangements for distribution are satisfactory.

No action has been taken with regard to tuberculous milk.

The Milk and Cream Regulations are under the control of the Police, as also the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

Milk (Mothers and Childrens) Order, 1918, is administered by the County Medical Officer of Health.

(b) Meat.

Bakehouses and Slaughtering-houses have been well kept.

There is no Public Slaughter-house. Free access is afforded to all Slaughter-houses, and notification is made immediately by Butchers where any diseased carcase is found.

No action has been taken under Sec. 117 P.H. Act, 1875.

One carcase of beef was condemned for Tuberculosis.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

			In 1914.	In Jan., 1920.	In Dec., 1920.	
Registered	...	...	1	...	1	...
Licensed	...	...	12	...	9	...
			—		—	—
Total	...	...	13	...	10	...
			—		—	—

(c) Other Food.

No unsound food has been discovered. The sanitary condition of premises where food is prepared, stored or exposed for sale has been good, and no action had to be taken in respect to them.

No case of food poisoning occurred.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

			Number.	Inspection.	Notices.
Factories	...	...	40	...	6
Workshops	...	...	184	...	48
Workplaces	...	...	1	...	1
			—		—
Total	...	...	225	...	55
			—		—

The notices were in connection with defective sanitary accommodation, and the provision of escape in case of fire, and both have been remedied.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.
TABLE OF NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

			Cases.	Removed to Hospital.
Scarlet Fever	...	...	69	60
Diphtheria	...	...	35	25
Enteric Fever	...	...	4	3
Pneumonia (Influenzal)	...	...	4	Nil.
Pneumonia (Primary)	...	...	6	Nil.
Erysipelas	...	...	6	Nil.
Dysentery	...	...	1	Nil.
Malaria	...	...	8	Nil.
Puerperal Fever	...	...	2	Nil.
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	1	Nil.
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	1	Nil.
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	...	...	18	6
Tuberculosis (Other Forms)	...	...	10	2
Total	...	...	165	96

There has been a considerable amount of sporadic Scarlet fever occurring in nearly all parts of the District, but in Great Langdale it was epidemic in character from June to August.

Diphtheria has also been sporadic in character, with two short epidemic outbreaks at Great Langdale and Arnside. No causation for the former was discovered. At Arnside about a dozen cases were notified within a few days, and the fact that all were supplied from one milk farm, threw suspicion upon it, though the cases all occurred within a limited area and comprised a twentieth of the customers from this farm. Swabs were taken from all workers at the farm, and one who delivered the milk was found to have *Bacillus Diphtheriæ* in his throat. He was isolated and in a fortnight his swabs were negative. There was no further outbreak. This man had never been ill, but was a possible temporary carrier, and if so he must have infected only a very small portion of his milk supply.

Four cases of Enteric Fever were notified, and one of these proved fatal; two of them were possibly due to water contamination, but the causes of the other two could not be traced.

There were no "Return Cases" of infectious disease: those notified under Regulations of 7th January, 1919, were not numerous; the Malaria and Dysentery cases contracted the disease abroad. One case of Encephalitis Lethargica was reported which ended fatally in a few days. There were two cases of Puerperal Fever. One case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum occurred, and both eyes were affected, but no permanent injury resulted. Bacteriological aids have been utilised in all suitable cases. No vaccinations have been performed under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917.

Measles was prevalent in the earlier months of the year and mumps during the latter part. School intimations were utilised freely. There was no Influenza epidemic, but the following precautions were adopted:

1. An emergency committee was established with full powers to act.
2. Additional nursing facilities were arranged for through the various local Nursing Associations, at the expense of the Council.
3. Stational Vaccinations were organised for prophylaxis.
4. A leaflet on the subject of Influenza was distributed to every house.

No locally contracted Anthrax or Rabies has occurred.

No facilities exist for the cleansing and disinfecting of verminous persons.

The notification of tuberculosis has been efficient.

The work in connection with Tuberculosis, Venereal Diseases, and Maternity and Child Welfare is in the hands of the County Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

1. *Staff.*

There is one Inspector and one Assistant Inspector, both employed whole time and fully qualified; they are also engaged in housing work. Mr. H. H. Jennings, the Assistant, resigned his post at the end of the year on appointment as Inspector to East Westmorland.

2. *Hospital Accommodation.*

Hospital Accommodation for Infectious Disease is provided at the Kendal Isolation Hospital, and for Smallpox at the Kendal Smallpox Hospital situated three miles outside the town. The

accommodation is generally sufficient, though occasionally there is some congestion.

The administration is good, and there is a good disinfecting plant.

3. *Local Acts, Etc.*

The following Acts are in operation :—

Sanitary Clauses of Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.

Section 27 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

Infectious Disease Prevention Act, 1890.

Byelaws are in force throughout the District for :—

New Streets and Buildings.

Tents and Vans.

Regulations under Sec. 13, Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order, 1885.

At Arnside for :—Slaughter-houses.

Private Scavenging.

Prevention of Nuisances.

In thirty-two parishes for :—Slaughter-houses.

The administration of these is effectively carried out.

Application for the extension of Byelaws for Private Scavenging and Prevention of Nuisances for all parishes has been made to the Ministry of Health.

It would be well to have Byelaws for all Slaughter-houses in the District.

Laboratories.

The Combined Districts of Westmorland have established Local Laboratories at Kendal for chemical and bacteriological examinations. Examinations for South Westmorland numbered 370, as follows :—

Diphtheria.	Tubercle in sputum.	Typhoid.	Blood.			Gonococcus.	Cerebro-Spinal Fluid.	Organisms.	Water.			Sewage Effluent.	Urine.	Total.
			Anemia.	Infection.	Malaria.				Deposits.	Analysis.	Bacteriology.			
252	31	9	1	5	13	5	1	6	1*	14	30	1	1	370

HOUSING.

General Housing Conditions.

Number of Houses	...	...	4260
Working Class Houses	...	...	2492
New Houses for Working Classes erected	...	} 1 complete. 13 erecting.	14
or in course of erection	...		
Population (estimated)	...	...	17740

There were no important changes during the year nor anticipated in the near future.

Extent of shortage of houses :—

To meet unsatisfied demand	...	...	142
To replace existing houses	...	...	30

A scheme for the erection of 140 new houses has been already submitted and of these 100 have been sanctioned.

It is anticipated that 47 additional new houses will be built by private enterprise.

The original scheme proposed new houses in the following parishes :—

Natland	...	...	...	36
Staveley	...	...	...	18
Arnside	...	...	...	13
Middleton	...	...	...	12
Storth	...	...	...	12
Beetham	...	...	...	9
Casterton	...	...	...	8
Milnthorpe	...	...	...	8
Preston Richard	...	...	...	6
Holme	...	...	...	6
Crosthwaite	...	...	...	6
Underbarrow	...	...	...	6
Total				140

With the exception of Natland and Holme, these schemes are in abeyance at present.

Overcrowding.

There is a certain amount of overcrowding, but not to a serious extent, due to the size of families and soldier sons married who are unable to get accommodation elsewhere. No measures can be taken to overcome this till more houses are built.

Fitness.

The condition of the bulk of the houses is good; the defects chiefly found consist of ground damp, general dampness, insufficient ventilation and light, and small defects in drainage, and are not generally due to lack of proper management on the part of the owners.

Remedies have been effected by means of Informal Notices followed by Statutory Orders where necessary, under Public Health Acts.

The chief difficulties have arisen on account of the high prices for repairs in the case of low rented houses and the scarcity of manual labour.

The water supply presents much difficulty and is often impossible owing to the rateable value not being sufficiently high to carry the necessary charges.

Unhealthy Areas.

There are no extensive areas that can be included under this heading, and no action has had to be taken nor any complaints made during the year.

Byelaws.

The existing Byelaws work well, and there is no need for revision, but an extension of their operation to wider areas is under consideration.

APPENDICES.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS.

Year ended December 31st, 1920.

I. GENERAL.

(1) Estimated Population	...	...	17,740
(2) General Death-rate	...	...	14.6
(3) Infantile Mortality	...	...	63
(4) Death-rate from Tuberculosis	...	...	1.11
(5) Number of Dwelling Houses of all classes	...	...	4,260
(6) Number of Working-class Dwelling Houses...	...	...	2,492
(7) Number of new Working-class Houses erected	...	...	1

2. UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

1.—*Inspection.*

(1) Total number of Dwelling Houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	531
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	...	502
(3) Number of Dwelling Houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	3
(4) Number of Dwelling Houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	294

2.—*Remedy of defects without Service of Formal Notices.*

Number of defective Dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action taken by Local Authority or their officers	12
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3.—*Action under Statutory Powers.*

A. Proceedings under Sec. 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., 1919.		
(1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs.		
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses which were rendered fit—		Nil.
(a) by owners	...	
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners		
(3) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close.		
B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.		
(1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	... ..	25
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied—		
(a) by owners	... ..	12
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	... ..	Nil.
C. Proceedings under Section 17 and 18 of the Housing Town Planning Acts, &c., 1909.		
(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of closing orders.		
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	... ..
(3) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses have been rendered fit.		Nil.
(4) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	... ..
(5) Number of Dwelling Houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders.		

3. UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Area represented to the Local Authority with a view to improvement Schemes under (a) Part 1 or (b) Part 2 of the Act, 1890	... ..	Nil.
Number of Houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with the consent of Local Authority under Sec. 25 Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919	... ..	4
Staff engaged on Housing Work, with briefly, the duties of each officer :—		
One Inspector and One Assistant Inspector.		